

Module 12

Managing

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This section looks at how changes in attitudes, legislation and technology affect Human Resources Management.

Human Resources Management is never static. It is always fluid and affected by changes from within and also outside of the organization. Let's begin by outlining the ways in which changes in the attitudes of workplace stakeholders can affect Human Resource Management.

There are many organizational stakeholders, and a change in attitude may occur from any one or a number of these stakeholders.

Stakeholders being any individual or organization that has a 'vested interest' in the successful operation of the organization and that stands to lose something if the organization is not successful.

The management of large-scale organizations must react to these changes in attitude and implement organizational change to reflect these attitudinal changes that impact on the performance of the organization.

These changes in attitude may occur as a result of social, political, legal, cultural, economic, technological, and demographic and like changes.

In addition, changes may occur in how organizations are managed and the type of employees employed within these organizations e.g. their gender, their skill level and their experience.

There are many changes in attitude that are reflected in the way that workplaces operate today.

These changes include:

- changes in attitudes related to union membership and representation
- industrial democracy
- enterprise bargaining
- use of outsourcing as a means of employment
- re-engineering of work practices
- altering organizational size in terms of employee numbers

Industrial democracy

- Employee ownership,
- Employee motivation,
- Effective management,
- Community spirit,
- Ideas and creativity,
- Fewer industrial disputes.

Changes in Technology

Organizations must ensure that they use the latest technology to maintain their competitive advantage or edge and so that they can keep costs down as low as possible by taking advantage of cost efficiencies and economies of scale.

There are many forms that this technology can take, from machine technology to information technology, and management must research all trends and developments in these areas and assess their relative significance to the organization.

The introduction of new technology usually brings with it a need to undertake an assessment of workplace job designs and job specifications. Some jobs no longer need to be performed whilst new jobs evolve from the introduction of the technology into the workplace.

Organizations need to alter training requirements to meet the needs that must be addressed if the new technology is to be used effectively and in order to retrain their employees for alternate jobs in the workplace. Assistance must be provided to those employees who find themselves de-skilled and those who need to be multi-skilled or cross-skilled.

Management of organizations must alter their employment policies accordingly and take into account the many impacts that technology has on all aspects of the employment cycle from recruitment and selection through to termination of employment.

Management of organizations may introduce a computerized database on employees and workforce trends generally. Such a human resource information system would take into account changes related to all aspects of the employment cycle and assist management with their planning and record-keeping.

The following advantages can be achieved from using the latest technology:

- Less risk to employee health from repetitive jobs.
- Decreased costs to the organization.
- Increased efficiencies in production.

- Higher quality levels of work and less waste.
- Assists improved organizational competitiveness.

Changes in legislation

Organizations must comply with State and Federal legislation with respect to how they operate and run their businesses.

In particular, organizations must follow the law with respect to how employees are to be treated and looked after in the workplace so that they are not discriminated against and so that their rights are not infringed.

There are various legislative enactments that cover areas related to employee relations, diversity in the workplace and equal employment opportunities, affirmative action and occupational health and safety.

These enactments must be understood and then management must implement policies and procedures, which ensures that the organization complies with the law.

Diversity and Equal Employment Opportunities legislation is designed to protect the rights of employees and to ensure that they are not discriminated against by management or by fellow employees.

Management of organizations must develop and implement policies and procedures to ensure that the diversity within the workforce generally and the specific employee base of the organization is recognized and treated justly and fairly.

The discrimination may take the form of:

- sexual harassment
- employment preference
- promotions • denial of training and transfer
- dismissal
- lower benefits than similar employees

In relation to occupational health and safety, management must ensure that the policies and procedures that the organization implements focus on:

- securing the health, safety and welfare of the employees
- protecting the employees against risks to health and safety
- assisting to secure a safe and healthy environment
- eliminating risks to employees in the workplace
- involvement of employees in the development and implementation of OH and S standards

Changes In work Place

Introduction

Management must also take into account the changes that are occurring in terms of the workforce - its composition and the participation rate of employees.

Management must follow social trends and demands and provide for flexibility and adaptability with respect to how their employees actually work and are treated by management.

Workplace diversity

the diversity of the workforce must also be utilized for the benefit of the organization.

For example, organizations need to implement policies that are 'family-friendly' and take into account the changing role and needs of women, in particular, in the workplace. The provision of childcare facilities is a prime example of a change occurring from a change in attitude in this area.

Workplace condition

- Work schedules must take into account the growing number of employees who want to work part-time, work fewer days in a full 35-40 hour working week etc.
- Employees must be able to respond to training needs and to become multi-skilled and cross-skilled.
- Employees must be able to work in teams and management must be able to accommodate employees in revised work schedules.
- Management must also assess the costs and benefits to the organization of outsourcing certain work tasks.